United Nations S/2010/21

Security Council

Distr.: General
13 January 2010

Original: English

Identical letters dated 12 January 2010 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write this letter of complaint following a recent increase in attacks emanating from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.

In the past week, most notably on 7 January 2010, terrorists fired 20 mortars and rockets from the Gaza Strip towards Israel, including a Katyusha rocket that landed south of Ashkelon, a city with a population of over 100,000 individuals. In addition, on 10 January 2010, an explosive device planted by terrorists along the Israel-Gaza border was detonated while the Israeli army conducted a routine patrol on the Israeli side of the border.

Following this escalation in attacks, Israel responded militarily in exercise of its right of self-defence under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Israeli response included the precision targeting of a group of terrorists who were preparing to launch additional rockets into Israel, the targeting of a weapons production facility in Tel Hawa, in the Gaza Strip, as well as the destruction of tunnels used to smuggle illegal arms into Gaza.

Israel will continue to take the necessary and appropriate measures in self-defence to confront any such terrorist attacks and activities. The Government of Israel is determined to ensure that the situation in southern Israel does not return to the status quo ante of December 2008. As Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu stated unequivocally on 10 January 2010: "Any firing at our territory will be responded to strongly and immediately."

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gabriela **Shalev**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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